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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KUWAIT 004456

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/FO, NEA/ARP, NEA/NGA, IO/UNP

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TAGS: [PREL](#), [MARR](#), [MOPS](#), [IZ](#), [KU](#), [UN](#)

SUBJECT: (U) POLICY CHANGE NEEDED FOR MEDEVAC OF NON-US  
COALITION PARTNERS IN IRAQ

(U) Sensitive But Unclassified; protect accordingly.

1. (U) THIS IS AN ACTION REQUEST; PLEASE SEE PARAGRAPH 5.

2. (SBU) SUMMARY: Soldiers from Coalition countries medevaced from Iraq through Kuwait are typically stranded in Kuwait days longer than Americans in similar condition, before being flown onward for better/longer-term care. The same thing happened in the case of UN personnel wounded in the terrorist attack on the UN HQs in Baghdad. This dissimilar treatment has already fueled negative perceptions on the part of victims' embassies and UN staff in Kuwait, some of it misdirected at this Embassy and US forces deployed here. Far more seriously, it could lead to unfair criticism of Kuwait, which would be a supreme irony given that many wounded have been brought here without the permission or even the knowledge of the GOK. There are many complications, and we understand that CENTCOM, USUN and others have devoted a great deal of effort to streamlining the process. Nonetheless, we believe the situation still needs improvement that can only come from decisions at the political level in Washington. We offer specific recommendations in the spirit of pushing for a sustainable solution. END SUMMARY.

3. (SBU) Discussion of the Problem: This problem first came to the attention of US Embassy Kuwait last month, after the Baghdad UN HQ bombing. Patients were flown to Kuwait for treatment at the 47th Combat Support Hospital (47CSH) and onward movement for further care that is unavailable here. Those who happened to be American citizens were flown on to Germany (Landstuhl) almost immediately, while those of other nationalities remained in Kuwait pending the lengthy and complex approval procedure required per normal regulations applicable worldwide. In the meantime, the patients received dedicated professional care, and eventually they were moved out -- apparently, in some cases without all the necessary approvals. A similar case occurred later in August involving four Georgian soldiers burned in Iraq. (One of the Georgians was transferred to a Kuwaiti hospital for a time. Septel will address the need for more systematic coordination with the GOK regarding use of Kuwaiti medical facilities.)

4. (SBU) Our understanding of regulations governing air transport of "non-eligible personnel" such as Coalition soldiers or UN staff, is as follows:

- 1) Determination is made that MEDEVAC of non-eligible personnel is necessary because:
  - a. Immediate threat to life, limb, or eyesight
  - b. Suitable commercial air not available and suitable treatment not available
  - c. MEDEVAC is in the US National Interest  
(Diplomatic post forwards request to DoS for determination)
- 2) Approval of evacuation requires all of the following:
  - a. Nation to which the patient belongs (call it Country X) must consent (this is a CENTCOM responsibility to obtain, it appears)
    - 1- If military casualty - this is done at USCENTCOM HQ in Tampa
    - 2- If civilian - is likely a diplomatic matter; State Department or USUN to solve, along with Country X
  - b. Country in which the treatment is to take place must consent; USEUCOM seeks the approval from German Foreign Ministry if going to Landstuhl (US military are covered by SOFA with Germany)
    - 1- Other nation's military - must be approved by Germany
    - 2- Civilian - requires approval by Germany, with enough info to issue a temporary visa
  - c. EUCOM sends the approval to the Joint Patient Movement Regulating Center (JPMRC) in Qatar which informs the Medical Regulating Office (MRO) at Camp Doha, Kuwait
  - d. Transportation is arranged concurrently
  - e. Care plan for patient is arranged with Germany or home country of patient
  - f. SECDEF-level approval required to move a foreign citizen on U.S. MIL AIR (this rule was apparently not applied when the US MEDEVACed the UN patients)
  - g. SECSTATE must certify that moving the foreign citizen on U.S. MIL AIR is in the National interest (required by DoD Directive 4515.13R)

15. (SBU) ACTION REQUESTED: We ask the State Department to coordinate inter-agency response addressing this issue to eliminate the negative perception of unequal and inhumane treatment of wounded personnel from coalition partners. We urge maximum consideration be given to concluding prior blanket arrangements with all coalition partners, including Kuwait, and Germany as the most likely recipient country for MEDEVACs from the AOR.

16. (U) Baghdad minimize considered.  
JONES